

In the Claims

1. A method of presenting an animal to be milked, the method comprising:

(a) rearwardly loading the animal into one of a plurality of milking stalls; and

5 (b) forwardly unloading the animal from the one of the plurality of milking stalls, each milking stall having a unique exit path extending from the milking stall to a released area.

2. The method of Claim 1, further comprising milking the animal prior to forwardly unloading the animal from the one of the plurality of milking stalls.

3. The method of Claim 1, further comprising passing the animal through an ingress/egress gate upon rearwardly loading the animal into the one of the plurality of milking stalls.

4. The method of Claim 1, further comprising operably aligning a milking robot with the one of the plurality of milking stalls prior to forwardly unloading the animal from the one of the plurality of milking stalls.

5. The method of Claim 1, further comprising loading the animal to be milked onto a transport cart prior to rearwardly loading the animal into the one of the plurality of milking stalls.

6. The method of Claim 1, further comprising monitoring animal specific data prior to unloading the animal from the one of the plurality of milking stalls.

7. The method of Claim 6, further comprising matching the monitored animal specific data with a corresponding identified animal.

8. The method of Claim 1, further comprising locating an operator pit adjacent a rear end of the milking stall.

9. The method of Claim 1, wherein the unique exit path associated with one of the plurality of milking stalls is parallel to a unique exit path associated with a second one of the milking stalls.

10. The method of Claim 1, further comprising moving a moveable platform from a spaced first position to a second position adjacent a rear end of the milking stall.

11. The method of Claim 1, further comprising simultaneously rearwardly loading a second animal into a second one of the plurality of milking stalls.

12. A method of presenting an animal to be milked, the method comprising:

(a) rearwardly loading the animal into a milking stall from a moveable transport cart; and

5 (b) forwardly unloading the animal from the milking stall.

13. The method of Claim 12, further comprising milking the animal prior to forwardly unloading the animal from the milking stall.

14. The method of Claim 12, further comprising passing the animal through an ingress/egress gate upon rearwardly loading the animal into the milking stall.

15. The method of Claim 12, further operatively aligning a milking robot with the milking stall prior to forwardly unloading the animal from the milking stall.

16. The method of Claim 12, further comprising loading the animal to be milked onto a transport cart prior to rearwardly loading the animal into the milking stall.

17. The method of Claim 12, further comprising monitoring animal specific information prior to unloading the animal from the milking stall.

18. The method of Claim 17, wherein monitoring animal specific information includes machine reading a tag connected to the animal.

19. The method of Claim 12, further comprising locating an operator pit adjacent a rear end of the milking stall.

20. The method of Claim 12, further comprising moving a moveable platform from a spaced first position to a second position adjacent a rear end of the milking stall.

21. The method of Claim 12, further comprising loading a plurality of animals onto the transport cart.

22. A method of presenting an animal to be milked, the method comprising:

- (a) loading a first animal onto a transport cart;
- (b) translating the transport cart to align with an unoccupied milking stall; and
- (c) rearwardly loading the first animal into the unoccupied milking stall from the transport cart.

23. The method of Claim 22, further comprising translating the transport cart along a direction transverse to a longitudinal dimension of the milking stall.

24. The method of Claim 22, further comprising forwardly unloading the first animal from the milking stall.

25. The method of Claim 22, further comprising forwardly unloading the first animal from the milking stall into a released area.

26. The method of Claim 22, further comprising forwardly unloading the first animal from the milking stall into a released area along a unique path.

27. The method of Claim 22, further comprising loading a second animal onto the transport cart prior to unloading the first animal.

28. The method of Claim 22, further comprising moving a moveable platform from a first position spaced from the milking stall to a second position adjacent a rear end of the milking stall.

29. The method of Claim 22, further comprising aligning a milking robot with the milking stall.

30. The method of Claim 22, further comprising acquiring animal specific data from the first animal on the transport cart.

31. The method of Claim 22, further comprising reading a radio frequency identification tag on the first cow when the first cow is in the transport cart.

32. A method of presenting an animal to be milked in a milking parlor, the method comprising:

- (a) translating a first animal transport cart along a predetermined path relative to a plurality of milking stalls to
- 5 operably locate the transport cart with respect to an unoccupied milking stall.

33. The method of Claim 32, further comprising forming a released area adjacent the plurality of milking stalls.

34. The method of Claim 32, further comprising operably locating a robotic arm with respect to the milking stall to dispose a milking claw into the milking stall.

35. The method of Claim 32, further comprising loading at least one animal on the first animal transport cart prior to moving the first animal transport cart.

36. The method of Claim 32, further comprising translating a second animal transport cart relative to the plurality of milking stalls.

37. The method of Claim 32, further comprising loading a plurality of animals onto the first animal transport cart.

38. The method of Claim 32, further comprising moving an ingress/egress gate from an open position to a closed position upon rearwardly loading the animal into the milking stall.

39. The method of Claim 32, further comprising acquiring data specific to a given animal during translation of the first animal transport cart.

40. The method of Claim 32, further comprising operably connecting a radio frequency identification reader to the first animal cart.

41. The method of Claim 32, further comprising urging the animal rearwardly into the milking stall by a distance independent of an adjacent milking stall.

42. A milking parlor comprising:

(a) a milking stall; and

(b) a transport cart translatable relative to the milking stall between a first position aligned with the milking stall and a second position spaced from the milking stall.

43. The milking parlor of Claim 42, further comprising an ingress/egress gate connected to the milking stall, the

ingress/egress gate moveable between a closed position and an open position.

44. The milking parlor of Claim 43, wherein the ingress/egress gate is a lift gate.

45. The milking parlor of Claim 42, wherein the ingress/egress gate rotates about a horizontal axis.

46. The milking parlor of Claim 42, wherein the ingress/egress gate rotates about a vertical axis.

47. The milking parlor of Claim 42, wherein the milking stall includes a closed end and further comprising an operator pit adjacent the closed end.

48. The milking parlor of Claim 42, wherein the milking stall includes an open end and further comprising a released area adjacent the open end.

49. The milking parlor of Claim 42, further comprising a robotic arm connected relative to the milking stall and moveable between a milking position at least partially disposed within the milking stall and a retracted position at least partially disposed outside the milking stall.

50. The milking parlor of Claim 42, further comprising a RFID reader connected to the transport cart.

51. The milking parlor of Claim 42, further comprising a moveable platform moveable between a first position spaced from the milking stall and a second position adjacent a rear end of the milking stall.